

Notices

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. 97-075N]

HACCP; Opportunity for Early Implementation

AGENCY: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announces that federally inspected meat and poultry slaughter and processing establishments may, upon request, implement and receive inspection under the new Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) regulations prior to the mandatory implementation date. FSIS expects to be able to make early implementation available to most interested establishments beginning in spring 1998.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before March 31, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. William Smith, Acting Assistant Deputy Administrator, Inspection Operations, Room 4437 South Building, Washington, DC 20250; (202) 720-3697.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) regulations set forth in 9 CFR part 417 become mandatory in all federally inspected meat and poultry slaughter and processing establishments during the period between January 26, 1998, and January 25, 2000 (61 FR 38806; July 25, 1996). The mandatory implementation date for large establishments (500 or more employees) is January 26, 1998; for small establishments (10 to 499 employees), it is January 25, 1999; and for very small establishments (fewer than 10 employees), it is January 25, 2000.

Some small and very small establishments have expressed interest in implementing the HACCP regulations set forth in 9 CFR part 417 before the mandatory date. Because the implementation of HACCP will likely reduce the risk of food borne illness from meat and poultry products, the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) will make every effort to accommodate requests for early HACCP implementation.

FSIS has expedited the training of inspectors, and expects by March 1998 to have a sufficient number of HACCP-trained inspectors available to respond positively to most requests. However, because the agency cannot project the actual number of requests, the granting of requests will be contingent on the availability of HACCP-trained inspectors.

Establishments that desire to be subject to the HACCP regulations before the mandatory date should submit a letter to this effect to the District Manager for the area in which the establishment is located. The letter should contain: (1) The establishment number; (2) the date that the establishment requests HACCP inspection to begin; and (3) an acknowledgment that the establishment cannot revert to traditional inspection once HACCP inspection is provided. Interested establishments should understand that early HACCP implementation means advancing the effective date of the HACCP regulations for them and that FSIS will enforce the HACCP regulatory requirements. FSIS will acknowledge receipt of the request and address the practicability of the requested implementation date, based on the availability of HACCP trained inspectors in a return letter. Because of the resource requirements involved in accommodating an establishment's request for early HACCP implementation, once the exchange of letters with FSIS confirming the agreement to implement HACCP on a given date is complete, the establishment will not be able to alter or withdraw from that agreement.

Done at Washington, DC, on: January 26, 1998.

Thomas J. Billy,
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 98-2298 Filed 1-29-98; 8:45 am]

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COMMITTEE FOR PURCHASE FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR SEVERELY DISABLED

Procurement List; Additions and Deletions

AGENCY: Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled.

ACTION: Additions to and deletions from the procurement list.

SUMMARY: This action adds to the Procurement List commodities and services to be furnished by nonprofit agencies employing persons who are blind or have other severe disabilities, and deletes from the Procurement List a commodity and services previously furnished by such agencies.

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 2, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled, Crystal Gateway 3, Suite 310, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, Virginia 22202-4302.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Beverly Milkman (703) 603-7740.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On October 3, November 28, December 5 and 12, 1997, the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled published notices (62 FR 51827, 63314, 64352 and 65411) of proposed additions to and deletions from the Procurement List:

Additions

After consideration of the material presented to it concerning capability of qualified nonprofit agencies to provide the commodities and services and impact of the additions on the current or most recent contractors, the Committee has determined that the commodities and services listed below are suitable for procurement by the Federal Government under 41 U.S.C. 46-48c and 41 CFR 51-2.4.

I certify that the following action will not have a significant impact on a substantial number of small entities. The major factors considered for this certification were:

1. The action will not result in any additional reporting, recordkeeping or other compliance requirements for small entities other than the small organizations that will furnish the commodities and services to the Government.